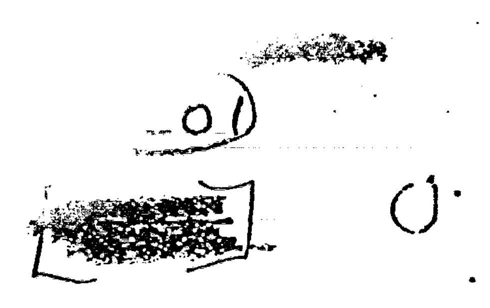


17 December 1953

MEMORANDUM TO: Assistant Director, Scientific Intelligence

FROM : Chief, Physics and Electronics Division, SI

SUBJECT : Current Status of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOB) Project.

1. In accordance with the verbal request of [Mr. Brent,] Exec/SI, on 30 November, the following resume of the current status of unidentified flying objects activities has been prepared.

2. P&E Division assumed responsibility for the OSI project on unidentified flying objects as a result of your memorandum of 27 May 1953. The project has been confined to maintaining awareness of the activities of other agencies (notably the USAF) in the unidentified flying objects business and to maintenance of files.

3. Status of Department of Defense Activities.

a. Air Force. The Air Force continues to maintain, but with apparently decreasing emphasis, its interest in UFOB's. The present interest of the Directorate of Intelligence, Hq., USAF, is confined to a cursory cognizance of ATIC's project (Bluebook No. 10073). At ATIC the project is carried by one officer (Capt. Charles A. Hardin), one airman (A/1C Max G. Futch), and a secretary operating as the Aerial Phenomena Section of the Electronics Branch, Technical Analysis Division. In spite of this limited staff, as well as several changes of project officer, the project records appear to be up-to-date. ATIC personnel no longer conduct field investigations of UFOB sightings (these are requested from USAF intelligence officers [primarily Air Defense Command and Airways and Air Communications Service] nearer to the sightings), but confine their activities to receiving and checking reports as received, requesting additional field investigation where necessary, performing necessary checking against meteorological, astronomical, aircraft and balloon data, and recording their findings and conclusions in a cross-referenced system by date, location, source, type of observation and conclusion drawn. The Aerial Phenomena Section also deals directly with the Public Information Office of Hq., USAF, regarding information for public release. For about the past year, approximately ten percent of the reported sightings have been tagged as unsolved.

Of particular interest is the fact that ATIC is in the process of transferring project Bluebook to Hq., Air Defense Command. According to Lt. Col. Harry Johnston, Chief, Electronics Branch, the reason for the transfer was that ADC had been doing most of the

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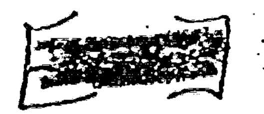
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investigative work of the project and "if it turns out that these things (UFOB's) are space ships or long range aircraft from another country, ADC is the (Air Force) Command that would have to take action." Col. Johnston followed this comment with the somewhat contradictory statement that the project transfer did not reflect any change in Air Force policy. It is undoubtedly true that ADC is the Air Force Command primarily concerned with UFOB's at the present time in that their interceptors are occasionally dispatched "against" reported UFOB's and that their reporting stations and communications systems are involved in a considerable portion of the UFOB activity. ATIC will maintain liaison with the project.

Approximately a year and one half ago [ATIC initiated a program to purchase cameras for selected ADC radar sites and AACS control towers in locations where consistent UFOB reports were received in the hopes of photographing UFOB's. One lens of the camera (a stereoscopic type) was to be covered with a single grating to record the spectrographic nature of the UFOB photographed. One hundred "Videon" 35 mm. cameras with "stereon" anastigmat f 3.5 lenses were purchased along with 100 gratings (15,000 line) from CENCO, Chicago. Seventy-four (74) cameras were distributed. Ninety percent of the gratings have "gone bad"--the actual grating separating from the plastic mounting plates. New gratings are expected shortly and ATIC expects to recall all of the 74 distributed cameras and re-equip them with the new gratings.]

Several months ago we were advised that ATIC planned to set up a concentrated instrumentation observational effort in the Albuquerque area. This has now been dropped.

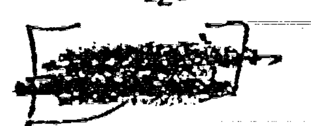
(Project STORK (SECRET) has been preparing, at ATIC request, a comprehensive statistical report on UFOB sightings during the period 1947 through 1952. This study is now expected to be completed by 15 December 1953.

ATIC issues status reports on Project Bluebook on a tri-monthly basis the most recent being Report No. 12 30 September 1953.

b. Navy. The Navy in spite of press reports to the contrary, is presently devoting only part of one ONI analyst's time to maintaining cognizance of UFOB's.

c. Army. The Army has evidenced little or no interest in UFOB's other than cooperating with the Air Force in reporting sightings and pertinent data using the Air Force format.

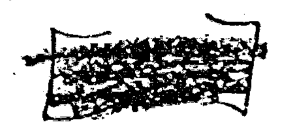
4. Investigations or Interests of Foreign Governments.





d. Other. Aside from a few scattered reports, mostly old, which indicate interest in UFOB's by private individuals or groups, there is no information of concern or inquiries of consequence in other foreign countries.

5. Results of OSI Panel Recommendations. The consultants who considered this problem in January 1953 recommended that UFOB's be stripped of special status and aura of mystery and that policies on intelligence, training, and public education pertinent to true indications of hostile intent or action be prepared. The definite drop in the number of "sightings" reported during 1953 over 1952 could be attributed to actions following these recommendations. Two recent books ("Flying Saucers From Outer Space" by Keyhoe and "Flying Saucers Have Landed" by Leslie and Adamski) take full advantage of "official" UFOB reports released by the Air Force to develop a central theme that UFOB's are extraterrestrial in origin. Fortunately, the latter book is so nonsensical and obviously fraudulent that it may actually help calm down public reaction. These books do, however, illustrate the risk taken by the present policy. There are no other as yet apparent results of these recommendations.



TODOS M. ODARENKO